



Clerk to the Council: Caron Potts
Withy Lane Farmhouse, Silver Street, Barton St David, Somerton, TA11 6DD.
Telephone 01458 850875 Email clerk@baltonsboroughparish.gov.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 3rd September 2026

PRESENT: Cllrs A Wotton (chair), M Phillips, M Dykes and F Maddock.

IN ATTENDANCE: Caron Potts (Clerk) and 1 member of the public

PUBLIC QUESTIONS: none

SOMERSET COUNCIL REPORT: information circulated prior to meeting.

VILLAGE HALL AND PLAYING FIELD TRUST REPORT: none

AGENDA

Meeting commenced at 7.02pm

72.26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Received from Cllrs A Clarke, R Clapp and M Godfrey

73.26 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS - none

74.26 EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS - none

75.26 ADOPTION OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MINUTES

Confirmed and signed as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 4th June.

76.26 NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED TO OR DECIDED BY SOMERSET COUNCIL

- a) Applications - To receive for comment
- b) Decisions given by Somerset Planning

2026/1088/VRC Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (Plans List) on consent 2024/2289/HSE (Erection of single-storey detached 3-bay carport adjacent to existing gravelled parking area). Address: Meadow Cottage, Ham Street. Decision: Approval.

2026/1592/APP Proposal: Proposal: Approval of details reserved by condition 18 (Phosphate credits allocation certificate) on planning consent 2026/0167/VRC in relation to 2024/0802/VRC & 2022/1647/FUL. Address: Blackberry Farmhouse, Martin Street. Decision: Approval.

77.26 MATTERS TO BE RESOLVED

1. Notice of Council Vacancy

The Clerk confirmed that notice had now been served and the PC can proceed and coopt a new councillor.

2. Donation of dishwasher, refrigerator and oven range to Baltonsborough Village Hall and Playing Field Trust
RESOLVED the Parish Council hereby gifts the above items. Action Clerk to notify.

3. Baltonsborough Shop signpost
RESOLVED proceed and buy the fingerpost sign for £135 from Parsigns. **Action Clerk.**

4. Drainage and flooding

a. EVAG visit

The Clerk confirmed that the visit by John Bird had gone well, they visited 6 properties and 5 took flood prevention kit and were grateful for the advice received.

b. Mill Stream clearing

This is now going to be undertaken by IDB with funds secured nationally. The Clerk has thus not proceeded with the grant application.

5. Playpark Inspection report and approval of actions required

Cllr Maddock confirmed that we have now received this year's report which found several issues which, given the age of the play park is to be expected. The 3 major areas of concern were the fixture of the nest swing, speed of gate closing and the zip wire. Other minor points have largely been addressed with the strimming and cutting back of weeds and brambles. There are some repairs needed for rotting wood. It was felt these could be done locally. Likewise, a repair to the matting which has lifted and is causing a trip hazard. RESOLVED approved the repairs. **Action - Clerk** to proceed and get a quote from GB Sports for the major repairs. **Cllr Wotton** would contact local carpenters about the wood. **Cllrs Wotton and Dykes** would look at patching the matting.

6. Workplan and strategy actions

a. Joint meeting with village hall to discuss budget priorities e.g. sports store, Muga & pavilion

A meeting has been arranged for 24th September. The Clerk presented the findings of the Muga research she'd undertaken – see appendix. In summary it would cost a minimum of £50k, likely to only be moderately used, mostly for boys playing football and would require ongoing subsidy. RESOLVED follow up after the VH joint meeting.

b. Traffic calming – is this realistic?

Cllr Dykes confirmed that this was not simple, he will continue trying to get answers regarding getting the speed data analysed.

c. Church Walk drains

The Clerk obtained a quote for ££1066 + vat from Oneline for gully pot cleaning, jetting and root cutting. Works to take place on 14 September. RESOLVED approved. Clerk to enquire about a camera.

7. Any updates or actions from previous minutes requiring Resolutions.

Cllr Dykes has some marine ply which will service as a door for the telephone box but will require fitting. RESOLVED proceed. **Action Cllr Wotton** to investigate options and costs.

In light of the number of wildfires nationally over the dry summer, it was raised that our Emergency Plan should include any fires getting out of control. RESOLVED agreed. **Action Cllr Wotton.**

PARISH COUNCIL FINANCE

78.26 APPROVAL OF PAYMENTS

Reviewed and approved a schedule of items of expenditure

1. Clerks salary for June and July including 5 holidays (leaving 20 remaining), 20i hosting renewal £92.27, new defibrillator pads £64.19, face masks £9.98 and phone contract £7.98 Total £886.09.
2. Clerks Salary for August £391.95 including phone contract £3.99
3. Run race medal grant application £60
4. Glasdon for new dog bin - £307.39

5. SPFA playpark inspection £140
6. Parsigns – finger post for PO and Shop £135

79.26 PAYMENTS MADE SINCE LAST MEETING AND BANK RECONSILIATION

Received and signed as a correct record, the payments list and the bank reconciliation figures against the bank statements as detailed on the monthly financial information report (see attached).

Current account £1394.38, Savings account £46069.48 – Total £47463.86

80.26 BUDGET VS SPEND TO DATE

Received and signed as a correct record, the latest budget vs spend to date in the cashflow spreadsheet which correlates to the bank reconciliation figures.

81.26 ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING ON 1st October

Meeting closed at 8.12pm

Signed

Date

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Appendix

MUGA Review Report - Baltonsborough Parish Council Meeting 3rd September

I have had feedback from 23 neighbouring parishes about their Multi-Use Games Areas.

In terms of usage, the responses were mixed.

- Only **8 out of the 23** said their MUGA is clearly *well used*. The majority reported **moderate or limited use**, mainly informal play, and mostly by **boys rather than girls**.
- Organised team bookings were described as **infrequent and unreliable**, and several councils noted that usage drops sharply if any fees are introduced. Free access is the main driver of regular use.

On facilities, most MUGAs support football, basketball and netball, with fencing and optional floodlighting. They provide a safe, enclosed space that reduces ball games in unsuitable areas.

Costs are significant. Independent UK quotes show that a basic MUGA starts around **£20–45k**, a typical community-level installation is **£45–80k**, and a full-spec floodlit facility is usually **£80–150k**. Most parishes relied heavily on grants, and grant conditions often require free public access. Several PC's mentioned that S106 money way ringfenced for Muga's but not their parish.

In short, a MUGA would be a **useful but moderately used facility**, and it would require **ongoing subsidy**.

Background

I sent an email to all Somerset Clerks asking three questions:

1. What sports/equipment does your MUGA accommodate?
2. Is it well used (daily/weekly), and by which age groups?
3. What was the cost, and would you recommend installing one?

A total of **23 responses** were received from PC's with Muga's.

Findings

1. Sports & Equipment

Most MUGAs support a similar mix of sports:

- Football (5-a-side goals or recessed goals)
- Basketball (hoops and backboards)
- Netball (full court markings and posts)
- Optional tennis/pickleball line markings
- Fencing to contain balls and improve safety
- Floodlighting for evening use (though expensive)

This makes MUGAs flexible, multi-sport spaces suitable for informal and semi-organised activity.

2. Usage & Age Groups

Usage across the 23 parishes was **not** consistently high.

- 8 out of 23 (around one-third) said their MUGA is well used.
- 10 out of 23 reported mixed or conditional use, typically:
 - Mainly boys
 - Informal play only
 - Higher use when access is free
- 5 out of 23 reported low or unclear use, or did not answer the question directly.

Key pattern:

MUGAs are used, but not heavily. Usage is uneven and often lower than councils hoped.

Organised team bookings are limited and unreliable, and free access significantly increases community use.

3. Costs, Funding & Value for Money

Current UK market pricing for community MUGAs:

- Small basic MUGA: £20,000–£45,000
- Medium community MUGA: £45,000–£80,000
- Large full-spec MUGA: £80,000–£150,000+
- High-end or complex installations: £150,000–£250,000

- Ongoing maintenance required for surfacing, fencing, and lighting.

Funding

- Most parishes relied on **grants and community fundraising**.
- Grant conditions often require **free public access**, limiting income potential.
- Councils consistently reported that **MUGAs do not pay for themselves**.
- Charging small hourly fees would take **years** to recoup costs.
- Income from team bookings is **low and inconsistent**.

Summary

Overall Assessment

A MUGA provides a **safe, enclosed, flexible space** for football, basketball, netball, and general youth activity. It is valued for informal play and can reduce ball games in unsuitable areas.

However, the evidence shows:

- Only **one-third** of parishes report **high usage**
- Most experience **moderate or low usage**
- Usage is **mainly boys**, with lower participation from girls
- Organised team use is **limited**
- Income generation is **minimal**
- Capital costs are **high**
- Ongoing maintenance and lighting costs are **significant**

***This report has been written using in part Copilot to summarise initial email responses.**